

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-9, 12-14, 16-22 and 24-26 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 20 is amended to incorporate the features of claim 23, claim 24 is amended to incorporate the features of claim 27, and claims 23 and 27 are correspondingly canceled. Thus, no new matter is added by this Amendment.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration as the amendments merely combine independent claims with claims respectively depending therefrom; (c) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (d) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

I. Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner is requested to consider the information identified in the November 10, 2005 IDS.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 1-3, 5-9, 12-14 and 16-19 are allowed, and for the indication that claims 23 and 27 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants herein amend claim 20 to include the subject matter of claim 23, and amend claim 24 to include the subject matter of claim 27. Accordingly, as acknowledged by the Office Action, claims 20 and 24, as well as the claims depending therefrom, are in condition for allowance.

III. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 20-22 and 24-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,052,745 (Miller). This rejection is moot in view of the above amendments.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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